

REMARKS

Applicants' attorney gratefully acknowledges the interview granted by Examiner Haugland on April 15, 2008.

The rejection of the claims under the Kanada '569, Nilsson '832 and Peter '360 patent documents has been obviated by revising independent claims 1 and 20 consistent with the agreement reached during the interview. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite a webbing retractor comprising a frame including only two leg plates, a spool disposed between the leg plates "such that said leg plates bear a rotational load of said spool," a driving mechanism "including a gear train," a clutch disposed entirely between the leg plates, a spiral spring that applies an urging force to the spool in the take-up direction, "a support member connected to said frame and disposed between said leg plates," wherein the clutch is disposed "directly adjacent" to a side of one of the leg plates,

"wherein gears of said gear train are rotationally mounted between said one leg plate and said support member."

None of the references of record either discloses or suggests such a combination of features. In particular, none of the references discloses the recited gear support member (an example of which is support plate 68 in Figure 1) located between the leg plates and connected to the frame. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

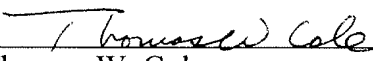
Claim 21 has been amended to include all of the previously discussed limitations of amended claim 1 and hence is patentable for at least all of the reasons given with respect to claim 1.

As the balance of the claims is dependent upon either claim 1 or 20, these claims are patentable at least by reason of such dependency.

Finally, new claims 25-29 have been added which distinguish the invention even further away from the Peter '360 patent document.

Now that all of the claims are believed to be patentable, the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance is hereby earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas W. Cole
Registration No. 28,290

Customer No. 25570

Roberts Mlotkowski & Hobbes P.C.
P.O. Box 10064
McLean, VA 22102
Phone: 703 677 3001
Fax: 703 848 2981